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BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268

2012 FEB -1 A 10:01

In the Matter of:

Alvord, Iowa 51230
Post Office State ZIP Code

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Docket No: A 2012-94

Carolyn Hein, Petitioner(s)

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

1. Petitioner(s) are appealing the Postal Service's Final Determination concerning the Alvord, Iowa post office. The Final Determination was posted 11-23-2011.
(date)

2. In accordance with applicable law, 39 U.S.C. § 404(d)(5), the Petitioner(s) request the Postal Regulatory Commission to review the Postal Service's determination on the basis of the record before the Postal Service in the making of the determination.

3. Petitioners: Please set out below the reasons why you believe the Postal Service's Final Determination should be reversed and returned to the Postal Service for further consideration. (See pages of the Instructions for an outline of the kinds of reasons the law requires us to consider.) Please be as specific as possible. Please continue on additional paper if you need more space and attach the additional page(s) to this form.

please see attached three (3) pages.

Docket No. A2012-94

(1)

To: Office of the Secretary
Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

From: Carolyn Hein
407 Cleveland St., PO 606
Alvord, IA 51230
January 25, 2012

Docket No. A2012-94 Re: Postal Service's determination to close the Alvord post office, Alvord, Iowa.

I wish to address the items in PRC Form 61. In the process of making its determination the Postal Service held a meeting in the community. The meeting, while announced as an opportunity for patrons to express concerns and opinions, as well as to ask questions, seemed to be a foregone conclusion. The conclusion was that the Post Office needed to save money, therefore the Alvord Iowa Post Office had to be closed. Factors noted were that there was no longer a Postmaster due to retirement and the freezing of hiring, as well as a determination that the Postal Service could save \$33,000 per year by this closing. The solution given was that patrons would be serviced by a rural carrier currently employed, with no loss of services. Patrons would either have a box in a cluster box unit or have a traditional mailbox clustered with others in the community. The Postal Service would maintain the area and provide delivery service without loss of any type of service, though there could be a change in the timing for mailing packages, buying stamps, etc. Internet usage was promoted for these services. Please note that rural communities with older populations often have patrons who do not use the internet for purchasing.

Part of my concerns were that the decision to close was made without adequate study of the financial impact. Since the rural carrier must fulfill many duties and the current rural carriers already have a full schedule of service, it would require an additional carrier to meet postal requirements. That eliminates the financial savings that were projected. Maintenance of an area or site requires funding also. That would cut into the Postal Service budget.

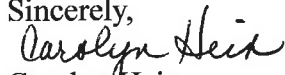
Another point is the impact on the community. Currently patrons, including the elderly or those with limited mobility, are able to mail letters or packages in a secure safe environment in their local community. Local businesses mail numerous packages. The local bank mails numerous items and must maintain a reliable timely schedule. These features already exist, they cannot be claimed as advantages under a different delivery system. As a matter of fact, the proposed change would lessen the effectiveness of the Postal System in rural America. Losing a post office lessens the identity of rural America, eliminates a common area, and costs the Postal System the opportunity to advertise its services as well as post necessary information.

In its Final Determination the Postal Service noted six items that would be an advantage in the "new" system. At least four of those items already exist in the current system, and one is inaccurate. For more detail, I am enclosing copies of the prior letters I have written on this matter.

At the meeting that was held, no answer was given to a request for a review of the items that the person in charge was noting to pass on regarding the meeting. Also, there was no answer to a request about persons and addresses to write to regarding the proposed closure. It appeared that those present came unprepared for patron concerns such as these. We were told to contact our congressmen, even though we were also told that congressmen do not have time to address concerns of the Postal Service because of weightier issues. A congressional staff representative present in the audience did give me an address and assured me that it would be forwarded to the appropriate party. That person was not conducting the meeting, however.

Thank you very much for listening to my concerns

Sincerely,


Carolyn Hein

②
Docket No. A2012-94

Carolyn Hein
407 Cleveland St
Alvord, IA 51230

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200
Washington DC 20268-0001

December 16, 2011

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am appealing the determination to close the Alvord Post Office in Alvord, Iowa. The post office is an integral part of the community. Its closure would be tantamount to the removal of a limb for a human being. Life would not end, but it would be subject to many stressors and severe inconveniences. Just as the loss of a limb often causes depression and drastic adjustment, so would the loss of the post office. I myself would most likely have to resort to using more e-mail to communicate, thus inadvertently diminishing the financial basis for the post office.

I consider the post office an essential part of the American scene. I have traveled in many states and have sought out post offices in some very remote areas. I have seen post offices that were only open in the summer, but most were open year round. Because of this, it is hard to understand why the hours cannot be adjusted.


According to the "Final Determination to Close the Alvord, IA Post Office and Continue to Provide Service by Rural Route Service" the rural carrier would have an immense amount of work added to the usual tasks if the postal patrons try to actually use the system that was stated wherein rural carriers provide all the features of a physical post office. Today I mailed a package at the Alvord IA Post Office. The package was weighed and a rate determined by the choice of delivery service. For many years I lived in the country and received mail via rural route carrier. I bought stamps and mailed packages at the local post office. In all the publicity that the post office has done in recent years, the only time I have heard that the rural carrier provides all the services of the local post office is when there is a proposal to close that local post office.

Regarding post office advertising—I'm not against it per se, but I find it incongruous that in recent years the United States Post Office was named as a sponsor of a major or national event, when no mention was made of the type of services the post office provides or how to go about getting those services. I think the ads noting the use of prepaid postal mailing boxes were very effective, since they gave actual information about a service. That was a good use of advertising.

In reviewing the "advantages" of the proposal (page 9), I would note that customers currently have 24-hour access to their mail (#2); the postal boxes currently within the post office are locked and therefore secure (#4); customers with only a post office box do not pay a fee (#5). All of these are already within the current system, not new advantages. The saving of time and energy noted in #6 will not happen because the customers will have to walk or drive to the CBU site in all kinds of weather (wind, snow, sleet, rain, etc.) without protection from the elements. In summary, at least four of the six items are not a change, and one is inaccurate and/or a disadvantage.

Please keep the Alvord IA Post Office open, as it provides an essential service to the community.

Sincerely,


Carolyn Hein

June 3, 2011

Carolyn Hein
2460 170th St
Alvord, IA 51230

Consumer Affairs Manager
U. S. Postal Service
2900 Hickman Rd
Des Moines, IA 50324

Dear Sir:

Recently I attended a meeting regarding the proposed closure of the United States Post Office in Alvord, Iowa. Present were many people from the community. My concern is for those people. They represent businesses, the rural elderly, as well as young people.

Why am I bothering to write a letter when the person who conducted the meeting said the purpose of the meeting was to gain public input and she would note our concerns and report them to the decisions makers in Washington, D.C. ? As the meeting neared its conclusion a member of the community asked that those items noted be reviewed with the group. We were told "There's no time for that. We have to wrap this up, people..." We never did learn what was noted. Also, I asked for an address to submit written comments, but the leader of the meeting had no names or addresses to give us.

The Post Office in a town such as Alvord is an integral part of its identity as well as a base of information. It is a method for communication which is being lost elsewhere due to the usage of internet facilities, e-mail, Face book, etc. The proposed closure would restrict communication among rural people. Those present at the meeting were strongly encouraged to use the internet to print postage, etc. Unfortunately a substantial number of the patrons do not have internet access. They usually communicate by regular mail and the telephone.

Currently the elderly or those with limited mobility are able to mail letters or packages without traveling a distance to do so. In the Post Office facility the mail is kept in a secure place; patrons are able to be in a secure safe environment while getting their mail.

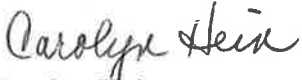
For local businesses that mail numerous packages of different sizes and weights a local facility is invaluable.

For the local bank which mails numerous items and must maintain a reliable, timely schedule, the local post office is essential.

Those present at the meeting were assured that the same services would be offered as in the past, but perhaps in a different manner. One method proposed was a cluster box unit. We were assured that an individual patron and the postman would have sole access to a parcel box if a patron received a parcel that did not fit into the individual's mailbox. I am not sure how the key system works since I have not seen it in use. The Post Office would take care of maintenance and access to the boxes. Unfortunately the community would lose the secure safe environment the physical post office affords now. Also, the postal department would have the expense involved with maintaining accessibility during all seasons of the year as the cluster boxes would be exposed to the elements.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,


Carolyn Hein